

PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO SET ASIDE IN
THE INTERESTS OF STABILITY " FIRST REVISER " SELECTIONS
MADE FOR THE GENERIC NAME " SELENE " LACÉPÈDE,
1803, AND FOR THE SPECIFIC NAMES " ROSTRATA " LESUEUR,
1817 (" MURAENA "), " LATIPINNA " LESUEUR, 1821
(" MOLLIENESIA "), AND " FUSCUS " STORER, 1839
(" SYGNATHUS ") (CLASS PISCES)

By REEVE M. BAILEY

(Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.)

(Commission Reference : Z.N.(S.) 952)

The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its Plenary Powers to set aside long-neglected " first reviser " selections for the names of one genus and three common species of American fishes, each of these being a case where application of the decision by the Copenhagen Congress (1953, *Copenhagen Decisions zool. Nomencl.* : 66-67) to substitute the " first reviser " principle for that of page precedence would result in undesirable and unnecessary changes in accustomed practice. Each of the taxa concerned was originally named at least twice by its describer in the same publication. In each case the name selected by the " first reviser " has been used only infrequently by subsequent workers or is wholly unfamiliar. The names which it is desired to protect are on the other hand in general use. Both the genus and the three species concerned are geographically widespread, and two of the species involved are well known to non-zoologists. The generic name which it is desired to conserve is *Selene* Lacépède, 1803 ; the corresponding specific names are : *rostrata* Lesueur, 1817, as published in the combination *Muraena rostrata* ; *latipinna* Lesueur, 1821, as published in the combination *Mollienesia latipinna* ; *fuscus* Storer, 1839, as published in the combination *Syngnathus fuscus*. These names are discussed in turn below.

" *Selene* " Lacépède, 1803 (Order Perciformes, Carangidae)

2. This generic name was introduced by Lacépède, 1803 (*Hist. nat. Poissons*, 4 : 560), for *Selene argentea* Lacépède, 1803. At the same time *Argyreiosus* Lacépède (*op. cit.* 4 : 566) was proposed for *Zeus vomer* Linnaeus, 1758 Günther, 1860 (*Cat. Fish. Brit. Mus.* 2 : 458), was apparently the first to

recognize that the names *argentea* and *vomer* apply to the same species, and as "first reviser" adopted *Argyreiosus* as the generic name. Following the principle of position precedence, however, most subsequent authors have employed *Selene*: Jordan & Gilbert, 1883 (*Bull. U.S. nat. Mus.* 16 : 439); Jordan & Evermann, 1896 (*Bull. U.S. nat. Mus.* 47(1) : 935); Smith, 1907 (*N. Card. geol. and econ. Surv.* 2 : 210); Meek & Hildebrand, 1925 (*Field Mus. nat. Hist., Zool.* 15(2) : 371); Bigelow & Welsh, 1925 (*Bull. U.S. Bur. Fish.* 40(1) : 236); Hildebrand & Schroeder, 1928 (*Bull. U.S. Bur. Fish.* 43(1) : 224); Breder, 1929 (*Field Book of Marine Fishes of the Atlantic Coast*, Putnam's Sons, N.Y. and London : 138); Ginsburg, 1952 (*Inst. mar. Sci.* 2(2) : 112); Bigelow & Schroeder, 1953 (*Fishery Bull. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Serv.* 53(74) : 379). A preponderant majority of authors have followed these and other general works in their use of *Selene*. Jordan, Evermann, & Clark, 1930 (*Rep. U.S. Comm. Fish. for 1928* (Pt. 2) : 275), however, in recognizing the principle of first reviser, reinstated *Argyreiosus*. They have been followed infrequently,

"*Anguilla rostrata*" (Lesueur), 1817 (Order Anguilliformes, Anguillidae).

3. The lengthy synonymy of the American eel is listed in Jordan, Evermann, & Clark, 1930 (*Rep. U.S. Comm. Fish. for 1928* (Pt. 2) : 77), and its nomenclature and synonymy have been discussed, among others, by Bean, 1909 (*Science (n.s.)*, 29 : 871-872), Jordan, 1917 (*Copeia*, No. 49 : 86), and Ginsburg, 1951 (*Texas J. Sci.* 3(3) : 435), all of whom employ the specific name *rostrata*. Lesueur, 1817 (*J. Acad. nat. Sci. Philad.* 1 (No. 5)), named the species five times in the following sequence of precedence: *Muraena rostrata* (: 81), *Muraena bostoniensis* (: 81), *Muraena serpentina* (: 81), *Muraena argentea* (: 82), and *Muraena macrocephala* (: 82). That the names *rostrata* and *bostoniensis* apply to the same species was apparently first recorded by Günther, 1870 (*Cat. Fish. Brit. Mus.* 8 : 31), who selected the name *bostoniensis* as the name to be used for this species.

4. The junior synonym, *Anguilla chrysopa* Rafinesque, was employed commonly until 1909 (Bean, *op. cit.*). Since then the name *rostrata* Lesueur has been used by most authors, e.g., Schmidt, 1924 (*Rep. Smithson. Inst. for 1924* : 279); Bigelow & Welsh, 1925 (*Bull. U.S. Bur. Fish.* 40(1) : 236); Jordan, Evermann, & Clark, 1930 (*Rep. U.S. Comm. Fish. for 1928* (Pt. 2) : 361); Ege, 1939 (*Dana Rept.* 16 : 89); and Bertin, 1956 (*Eels, a biological Study*, London : 167). Jordan, 1929 (*Man. Vert. Animals Northeastern U.S.* (13th ed. : 56), however, called attention to the selection of *bostoniensis* by Günther, the first reviser, and employed this name, as did Hubbs and his associates, among others, until the rule of first reviser was invalidated (temporarily) by the International Congress of Zoology in 1948. Thus *rostrata*, with position precedence, was revalidated. After reverting to the rule of the

first reviser following the Copenhagen Congress in 1953, it is again correct under the Rules to call the American eel by the specific name *bostoniensis*. Practically all American workers, however, now prefer the customary name, *Anguilla rostrata* (Lesueur).

“ *Poecilia* ” (or “ *Mollienesia* ”) “ *latipinna* ” (Lesueur), 1821
(Order Cyprinodontiformes, Poeciliidae)

5. Lesueur, 1821 (*J. Acad. nat. Sci. Philad.* 2(1) : 3-4), described *Mollienesia latipinna* (from New Orleans) and *Poecilia multilineata* (from East Florida). It appears that Agassiz, 1853 (*Amer. J. Sci. Arts.* (2) 16 : 135) was the first to indicate that these names apply to the same species. He wrote :—

“ You may remember the remarkable genus *Mollienesia* described by Lesueur from specimens obtained from Lake Ponchartrain and from Florida. If you do not, pray look for the figures in the Journal of the Acad. of Nat. Sci., vol. 2, to appreciate the facts here mentioned. From its structure and from the sexual differences observed among other Cyprinodonts, I have long entertained the opinion that this genus had been established upon the males of *Poecilia multilineata* also described by Lesueur (same Journal), and both admitted as distinct in the great natural history of fishes by Cuvier and Valenciennes. Having found both together in all the Gulf States, I have watched them carefully, and in Mobile as well as in New Orleans, I have seen them day after day in copulation during the months of April and May; so that their specific identity is now an established fact. I have caught hundreds of them and found all the Poecilias to be females and all the Mollinesias males; and what is further very interesting, the females viviparous. I have been able to trace their whole embryonic development in the body of the mother, in selecting specimens in different stages of gestation ”.

6. Later, 1855 (*ibid.* 19 : 136), Agassiz reaffirmed his conviction that these nominal species were identical and clearly indicated his choice of name : “ . . . all those that answer to the description of *Mollienesia latipinna* are males and all those corresponding to the description of *Poecilia multilineata* are females. There are several species of this family much smaller than *this Poecilia multilineata* [italics mine] ”. Thus Agassiz, as first reviser, selected the name *multilineata*. Günther, 1866 (*Cat. Fish. Brit. Mus.* 6 : 348), perhaps unaware of Agassiz's brief papers, also regarded the two nominal species as identical and chose the name *latipinna*. To my knowledge all subsequent authors have followed this action. In the interest of stability it is hoped that *Mollienesia latipinna* Lesueur may be added to the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* in preference to the name *Poecilia multilineata* Lesueur. According to individual subjective judgment this species is currently placed either in the genus *Poecilia* or in the genus *Mollienesia*.

" *Syngnathus fuscus* " Storer, 1839 (Order Syngnathiformes, Syngnathidae)

7. The only western-Atlantic pipefish found north of Chesapeake Bay, Hildebrand & Schroeder, 1925 (*Bull. U.S. Bur. Fish.* 43(1) : 182) was originally named twice, as *Syngnathus fuscus* and as *Syngnathus peckianus* by Storer, 1839 (*Fishes of Massachusetts* : 162-163). Shortly thereafter Storer, 1846 (*Syn. Fishes N. Amer.* : 491 [: 238 in separate]) recognized that these nominal species were identical and selected the name *Syngnathus peckianus* as the name to be used for this species. This name was employed also by Günther, 1870 (*Cat. Fish. Brit. Mus.* 8 : 157) & Jordan, 1929 (*Man. Vert. Animals Northeastern U.S.* (13th ed.) : 114). The name *fuscus* has had general usage (the species being variously assigned to the genera *Syngnathus*, *Siphostoma*, and *Syrichtes*), for example by Jordan & Gilbert, 1883 (*Bull. U.S. nat. Mus.* 16 : 383); Jordan & Evermann, 1896 (*Bull. U.S. nat. Mus.* 47(1) : 770); Smith, 1907 (*N. Carol. geol. and econ. Surv.* 2 : 171); and Bigelow & Welsh, 1925 (*Bull. U.S. Bur. Fish.* 40(1) : 175); Hildebrand & Schroeder, 1928 (*Bull. U.S. Bur. Fish.* 43(1) : 182); Breder, 1929 (*Field Book of Marine Fishes of the Atlantic Coast*, Putnam's Sons : 103); Jordan, Evermann, & Clark, 1930 (*Rep. U.S. Comm. Fish. for 1928* (Pt. 2) : 242); Herald, 1942 (*Stanford Ich. Bull.* 2(4) : 133); and Bigelow & Schroeder, 1953 (*Fishery Bull. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Serv.* 53(74) : 312).

8. For the reasons set forth above the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is asked in the interest of stability and universality in nomenclature :—

(1) to use its Plenary Powers :—

(a) to set aside, in respect of each pair of names specified below, all selections made by First Revisers as to the relative precedence to be accorded to the names specified in Col. (1) and Col. (2) respectively, the names comprised in each of the pairs concerned being names published in the same work and on the same date as one another and being names currently regarded by specialists as applicable to the same taxon :—

Name proposed to be used in preference to name specified in Col. (2)
(1)

(i) *Selene* Lacépède, 1803

(ii) *rostrata* Lesueur, 1817, as published in the combination *Muraena rostrata*

Name proposed to be rejected in favour of name specified in Col. (1)
(2)

Argyreiosus Lacépède, 1803

bostoniensis Lesueur, 1817, as published in the combination *Muraena bostoniensis*

Name proposed to be used in preference to name specified in Col. (2)	Name proposed to be rejected in favour of name specified in Col. (1)
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(1)

(2)

(iii) *latipinna* Lesueur, 1821, as published in the combination *Mollienesia latipinna*

(iv) *fuscus* Storer, 1839, as published in the combination *Syngnathus fuscus*

multilineata Lesueur, 1821, as published in the combination *Poecilia multilineata*

peckianus Storer, 1839, as published in the combination *Syngnathus peckianus*

(b) to direct that in the case of the names comprised in each of the pairs of names specified in (a) above the name specified in Col. (1) be accorded precedence over the name specified in Col. (2) ;

(2) to place the under-mentioned generic name on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* :—

Selene Lacépède, 1803, a name taking precedence over the name *Argyreiosus* Lacépède, 1803, under the Ruling given under the Plenary Powers in (1)(b) above (gender : feminine) (type species, by selection by Jordan & Gilbert (1883) : *Selene argentea* Lacépède, 1803) ;

(3) to place the under-mentioned specific names on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* :—

(a) *rostrata* Lesueur, 1817, as published in the combination *Muraena rostrata*, a name taking precedence over the name *bostoniensis* Lesueur, 1817, as published in the combination *Muraena bostoniensis*, under the Ruling given under the Plenary Powers in (1) (b) above ;

(b) *latipinna* Lesueur, 1821, as published in the combination *Mollienesia latipinna*, a name taking precedence over the name *multilineata* Lesueur, 1821, as published in the combination *Poecilia multilineata*, under the Ruling given under the Plenary Powers in (1)(b) above ;

(c) *fuscus* Storer, 1839, as published in the combination *Syngnathus fuscus*, a name taking precedence over the name *peckianus* Storer, 1839, as published in the combination *Syngnathus peckianus*, under the Ruling given under the Plenary Powers in (1)(b) above ;

(d) *vomer* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the combination *Zeus vomer*.

9. The present application has been transmitted to a number of representative ichthyologists in Canada and the United States. The following persons support all items of paragraph 8 :

Henry B. Bigelow, James E. Böhlke, Charles M. Breder, Jr., W. I. Follett, William A. Gosline, Earl S. Herald, Robert H. Kanazawa, Ernest A. Lachner, Giles W. Mead, Robert Rush Miller, Edward C. Raney, C. Richard Robins, William C. Schroeder, Leonard P. Schultz, W. B. Scott, Royal D. Suttkus, William Ralph Taylor, Vadim D. Vladykov, Loren P. Woods.

John L. Hart also supports the application except that he expresses no opinion on *latipinna*. William E. Ricker supports retention of *rostrata*, but expresses no opinion on the other names. Among the respondents none objects to any of the items set out in paragraph 8.

10. So far as is known, the generic name *Selene* Lacépède, 1803, has never been taken as the base for a family-group name. This genus is currently assigned to the family CARANGIDAE. Accordingly, no family-group-name problem arises in the present case.

SUPPORT FOR THE APPLICATION REGARDING THE GENERIC NAME " LABECERAS " SPATH, 1925 (CLASS CEPHALOPODA, ORDER AMMONOIDEA)

By D. T. DONOVAN

(*Department of Geology, University of Bristol*)

(Commission Reference : Z.N.(S.) 1154)

(For the application here referred to see *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 13 : 213-215)

(Letter dated 6th September 1957)

I am writing to support Mr. C. W. Wright's application to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to designate *Labeceras bryani* Whitehouse, 1926, as the type species of the genus *Labeceras* Spath, 1925.